

Amendment and Response

Applicant: David J. Arcaro et al.

Serial No.: 10/616,816

Filed: July 10, 2003

Docket No.: 100111670-1

Title: THERMALLY SELF-REGULATING FUSING SYSTEM INCLUDING STATIONARY HEATING ASSEMBLY

7. (Currently Amended) ~~A system as recited in claim 1~~ A fusing system comprising:
a stationary heating assembly comprising a thermally self-regulating heating element comprising a positive temperature coefficient (PTC) ceramic; and
a pressure roller proximately positioned relative to the heating assembly such that the pressure roller and the heating assembly form a nip area therebetween configured to receive sheet media;
wherein the heating assembly further comprises a fixed covering exposed to the nip area, the fixed covering being compliant and having a low coefficient of sliding friction,
wherein the covering comprises a silicone elastomer.
8. (Currently Amended) A system as recited in claim ~~18~~ ⁷ wherein ~~the covering comprises a~~ ^{the} ~~silicone elastomer is~~ ^{coated} with PTFE. ⁷ _^
9. (Currently Amended) A thermal transfer overcoat (TTO) device comprising a fusing system comprising:
a stationary heating assembly comprising a thermally self-regulating heating element comprising positive temperature coefficient (PTC) ceramic;
a pressure roller proximately positioned relative to the heating assembly so that they form a nip area therebetween that is configured to receive sheet media;
wherein the heating assembly further comprises a covering exposed to the nip area, the covering being compliant while having a low coefficient of sliding friction,
wherein the heating assembly further comprises a flexible polyimide film circuit around the PTC ceramic.
10. (Cancelled)
11. (Currently Amended) A system as recited in claim ~~10~~ ¹⁵, further comprising a pressure roller proximately positioned relative to the heating assembly so that they form a nip area therebetween that is configured to receive sheet media.

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claimed in amended independent claim 9, wherein the heating assembly includes a flexible polyimide film circuit around the PTC ceramic.

In view of the above, Applicant submits that independent claim 9 is patentably distinct from the Satou et al. and Natsuhara et al. patents and, therefore, is in a condition for allowance. Applicant, therefore, respectfully requests that the rejection of claim 9 under 35 U.S.C. 102(b) be reconsidered and withdrawn and that claim 9 be allowed.

Allowable Subject Matter

Claims 19-21 are allowed. Applicant appreciates the indicated allowance of these claims.

Claims 3-4, 7-8, 15, and 18 are objected to as being dependent upon a rejected base claim, but would be allowable if rewritten in independent form.

Applicant agrees with the Examiner's conclusions regarding patentability without necessarily agreeing with or acquiescing in the Examiner's reasoning. In particular, Applicant submits that the above-identified claims are allowable because the prior art fails to teach, anticipate or render obvious the invention as claimed, independent of how the invention is paraphrased.

With this Amendment, Applicant has rewritten allowable claim 3 in independent form to include all of the limitations of the base claim (claim 1) and any intervening claims (none). In addition, Applicant has amended claims 2 and 4-6 to depend from rewritten independent claim 3. As rewritten claim 3 is now believed to be in allowable form, Applicant respectfully submits that dependent claims 2 and 4-6 are allowable in dependent form. Applicant, therefore, respectfully requests that the objection to claims 3-4 be withdrawn and that claims 2-6 be allowed.

With this Amendment, Applicant has rewritten allowable claim 7 in independent form to include all of the limitations of the base claim (claim 1) and any intervening claims (none). In addition, Applicant has amended claim 8 to depend from rewritten independent claim 7. As rewritten claim 7 is now believed to be in allowable form, Applicant respectfully submits that dependent claim 8 is allowable in dependent form. Applicant, therefore, respectfully requests that the objection to claims 7-8 be withdrawn and that claims 7-8 be allowed.